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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
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February 4, 2005

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – RENAISSANCE
UNLIMITED, RENAISSANCE #1 AND RENAISSANCE #2**

We have completed a review of Renaissance #1 and Renaissance #2 Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by the Renaissance Unlimited. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Renaissance #1 and Renaissance #2 are six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 7-14 who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, each facility was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children. Both Group Homes are located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, facility inspections, and interviews with two children placed in each Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address several areas where improvements are needed.

Renaissance #1

Renaissance #1 Group Home needs to create Needs and Services Plans that have detailed, measurable, and achievable goals; and document the residents' and their placement workers' participation in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans.

Renaissance #2

Renaissance #2 Group Home needs to make repairs to its facility; provide residents with appropriate athletic and recreational equipment; assist residents with the clean-up and organization of their rooms, remove scissors from residents' drawers; document the residents' and their placement workers' participation in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans; and include the residents in the planning of the recreational activities.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide a corrective action plan to the Children Services Group Home Ombudsman within 20 business days from the date of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Acting Chief Probation Officer
Carol Choi, Executive Director, Renaissance Unlimited
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Renaissance Unlimited
Renaissance #1
2718 S. Redondo Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90016
Phone: (323) 935-1786
License No.: 191800135
Rate Classification Level: 6**

I. Facility and Environment

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Renaissance #1 Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is located in a suburban neighborhood. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. There are books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current. However, the goals are not detailed, measurable, or achievable. In addition, there is no documentation to support that the residents or their authorized representatives participated in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly reports are not comprehensive because they do not address specific goals.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular weekly individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendations**1. Renaissance Unlimited management:**

- a. **Create Needs and Services Plans that have detailed, measurable, and achievable goals.**
- b. **Maintain documentation to show that the residents or their authorized representatives participate in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans.**
- c. **Develop comprehensive quarterly reports that address the goals stated in the residents' Needs and Services Plans.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents are attending school. Both records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports for the residents. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This information was appropriately documented.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their social workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides its residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. The residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage space.

The residents have life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Renaissance Unlimited
Renaissance #2
14835 Purche Ave.
Gardena, CA 90249
Phone: (310) 323-8096
License No.: 198201583
Rate Classification Level: 6**

I. Facility and Environment

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Renaissance #2 Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is located in a suburban neighborhood. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained and blends well with the other homes on the block. However, the stucco near the entrance door is chipped and the light fixture near the front door is missing a cover. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is moderately maintained. The residents are able to personalize their bedrooms by posting pictures and personal items on the walls. However, there are some areas that need improvement.

In the kitchen, one light fixture is broken and another light fixture is missing a cover. In addition, the oven is missing a handle rendering it unsafe to open when hot, the dishwasher is broken, and the window is dirty. In the bathroom, the sink is detached from the wall.

Although well furnished, there are clothes and personal items scattered throughout the bedrooms. Specifically, in bedroom number two there are piles of unwashed laundry in the closet, some of the residents' clean clothes are kept in plastic bags, one of the pillows is flat and dirty, and the room has an odor. Sharp scissors were found in the dressers of two residents posing a safety hazard.

The Group Home does not have athletic and recreational equipment for the residents. In addition, the Group Home does not have a sufficient variety of board games. The residents' computer is operational and there are some books available.

There is a sufficient supply of food that is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendations

1. Renaissance Unlimited management:

- a. Repair the stucco near the entrance door.**
- b. Replace the light fixture covers near the front door and in the kitchen.**
- c. Clean the kitchen window.**
- d. Replace the oven handle.**
- e. Replace or repair the dishwasher.**
- f. Repair the bathroom sink.**
- g. Assist the residents with the clean-up of their rooms, organization of their clothes, and with their laundry.**
- h. Replace the worn and dirty bed pillow in bedroom number two.**
- i. Remove scissors from residents' drawers.**
- j. Provide residents with appropriate recreational equipment.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

While the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, the goals are not detailed, measurable, or achievable. In addition, there is no documentation to support that the residents and/or their authorized representatives participated in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly reports are not comprehensive because they do not address specific goals.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendations

2. Renaissance Unlimited management:

- a. Create Needs and Services Plans that have detailed, measurable, and achievable goals.**
- b. Provide documentation to show that the residents and their authorized representatives participate in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans.**
- c. Develop comprehensive quarterly reports that address the goals stated in the residents' Needs and Services Plans.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents are attending school. Both records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports for the residents. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency is not providing sufficient recreational activities to its residents. The residents expressed a lack of satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided by the Group Home. The residents reported, and the recreation schedules confirm, that the residents are exposed to a very limited number of organized age appropriate outings and events. The residents also stated that they do not participate in the planning of the activities.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

Recommendations

3. Renaissance Unlimited management:

- a. Provide a sufficient number of age appropriate recreational activities.**
- b. Include residents in the planning of recreational activities.**

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This information was appropriately documented.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their social workers, probation officers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Comments:

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides its residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. The residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage space.

The residents have life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.